

VA**U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs**

News Release

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Legislation signed by the President June 9 increases by 20 percent Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) monthly education payments to veterans who enrolled in the active duty or reserve components of the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB).

Effective Oct. 1, 1998, the full-time rate for MGIB-Active Duty enrollees with three years' service increases to \$528 from \$439.85. For a full 36 months, the total amount goes from \$15,834.60 to \$19,008. The rate for those with two years' service increases to \$429 from \$357.38, or a total of \$15,444 from \$12,865.68.

Also, Vietnam Era GI Bill enrollees who converted to the MGIB-Active Duty program will see their monthly rates increase to \$716 from \$627.85, or a total of \$25,776 from \$22,602.60. MGIB-Selected Reserve trainees will get a monthly rate increase to \$251 from \$208.93, or a total of \$9,036 from \$7,521.48.

Other veterans' benefits improved under the law and taking effect Oct. 1 include:

- The one-time allowance for disabled veterans needing modified controls or wheelchair lifts for an automobile increases to a maximum \$8,000 from \$5,500.
- The one-time specially adapted housing grant for disabled veterans who have lost, or lost the use of, both lower extremities increases to \$43,000 from \$38,000.
- The special housing adaptation grant for veterans who are blind or have lost, or lost the use of, both hands increases to \$8,250 from \$6,500.
- A \$50-a-month increase in pensions paid to low-income veterans in need of regular aid and attendance was also approved.

The law also repeals a 1990 law that permanently terminated eligibility for dependency and indemnity compensation for a veteran's survivor who remarried. The pre-1990 policy that takes effect Oct. 1 allows benefits to be restored if the marriage is terminated.